

ACTUATING FUNCTIONALITY IN ELECTRONIC DEVICE

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to actuating functionality in an electronic device.

5 BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Electronic devices have a continuously increasing number of functions and applications included. Providing the user information on functions/applications included in a device, and especially new applications, has not been solved in a satisfactory manner. User manuals in their current format
10 do not give sufficient support for a user in getting familiar with a device and solving possible problems when using the device. That is, user manuals are sometimes unclear in their instructions and following written instructions is often a time-consuming activity.

Therefore, there is a need to provide a solution to how a user could
15 automatically run a new application in an electronic device and how a user could efficiently solve possible problem situations when using the device.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

It is thus an object of the present invention to improve the ways how to operate electronic devices. In one embodiment of the invention, there is provided an arrangement for performing functionality in an electronic device. The arrangement includes a data storage, including at least one data storage element including instructions needed to perform at least one function in the electronic device, wherein the electronic device includes reading means for reading the data storage element, the electronic device further including controlling
20 means for performing at least one function defined by the instructions included in the read data storage element included in the data storage.

In one embodiment of the invention, there is provided an electronic device, including reading means for reading at least one data storage element, and controlling means for performing one or more functions on the basis of the
30 read data storage element.

In one embodiment of the invention, there is provided a data storage. The data storage includes at least one data storage element, the element including instructions needed to perform an operational function in an electronic device.

In one embodiment of the invention, there is provided a method for initiating functionality in an electronic device, the method comprising reading, by using the device, at least one data storage element from a data storage, the element including instructions needed to perform at least one function in the electronic device, performing, in the electronic device, at least one function defined by the instructions included in the one or more read data storage elements included in the data storage.

The data storage according to the invention can be a user manual, for instance. Then, the user is able to locate a solution to a problem in the user manual and can perform operating settings by reading a data storage element that solves the problem from the manual. In another embodiment of the invention, the data storage refers to a selling box in which the electronic device, such as a mobile phone, is sold. People are often faithful to the phone mark and only buy new versions of the same mark they have used before. In such cases, when buying a new phone, the buyer basically knows most of the features included in the device from his/her past experience from using a previous version of the phone mark. In such a situation, the user would only be interested in the most important new features in comparison to the previous version and thus the selling box could be utilized as an important tool for informing the user about and introducing him to the new features in the phone. In addition to the given examples, data storage can also refer to a street advertisement, a postcard, a wall in a public building, or some similar structure allowing a data storage element to be fastened to.

A data storage element that is included in the data storage refers to a radio frequency (RF) tag, for instance. The data storage element can also be a barcode, a www address, invisible data or some corresponding entity that is capable of storing data that can be read by an external reading device. In the invention, the data storage contains a plurality of said data storage elements and the user of the electronic device can choose a desired data storage element to perform a certain operational function in the electronic device. Data storage elements are so positioned in the data storage that there is no or at least a very little risk of reading an unintended data storage element.

The invention provides the significant advantage of being able to perform sometimes tedious and complex functions by simply locating a suitable data storage element and using the electronic device to read the located data element. Additionally, new applications associated with the device can

easily be run and tried out.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

In the following the invention will be described in greater detail by means of preferred embodiments with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which

Figure 1A illustrates one embodiment of the method according to the invention;

Figure 1B illustrates another embodiment of the method according to the invention;

Figure 1C illustrates still another embodiment of the method according to the invention;

Figures 2A and 2B illustrate one usage example of an arrangement according to the invention;

Figure 3 illustrates another usage example of an arrangement according to the invention;

Figure 4 shows one embodiment of an electronic device according to the invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The invention is in the following illustrated by referring to the accompanied drawings, where Figures 1A to 1C refer to embodiments of the method. Step 110 in Figure 1A refers to reading, by using the electronic device, one or more data storage elements from a plurality of data storage elements that are included in a data storage. According to step 112, operational function(s) that correspond to the one or more read data storage elements, are performed in the electronic device.

Figure 1B specifies the method in Figure 1A. In Figure 1B, it is assumed that the data storage is an operating manual containing instructions for operating the electronic device. At least some of the pages of the manual are equipped with data storage elements, such as RF tags that can be read by the electronic device, which contains a reader. Data storage elements can be positioned on the pages of the manual in such a way that erroneous reading of a tag is avoided. For instance, if pages 9 and 10 form a double page of the manual and the user wishes to read a tag on page 10, one must avoid reading a possibly existing tag on page 9, and also avoid reading a tag on other even pages (8, 6, etc.) which are under page 10 in the manual. One way to avoid

erroneous reading of tags residing on the same double page is to place tags far enough from each other. For instance, if the maximal reading distance from a tag is 5 cm, tags on the same double page could be placed at least 8 cm from each other. Tags on overlapping, such as even, pages could be placed so that on page 8 the tag is at the top of the page, whereas on page 10 the tag could be placed at the bottom of the page. One way to avoid erroneous reading of a tag is to set the reading distance so short that the electronic device practically has to touch the tag in order to be able to read it.

Step 100B refers to a situation where the user of the electronic device has encountered a problem when using the electronic device or for some reason wishes to change the settings of the device. An example of such a situation is the setting of a PIN (Personal Identification Number) code, that is, the access code for protecting the SIM (Subscriber Identity Module) card against unauthorized use. Then, the user could according to step 102B locate the page in the manual that describes the steps to be taken when setting the PIN code.

Then, instead of manually performing the disclosed functions by using the keyboard of the electronic device, the user can place the electronic device close to the RF tag on the located page. When the electronic device is close enough to the tag, the information included in the tag is read according to step 110B. Step 112BA performs the functions in the mobile phone in an automatic manner so that the desired end result is achieved. In the case of setting a PIN code, the phone could then directly jump to the menu item requesting a new PIN code so that user does not need to navigate in the menu structure of the phone to locate the desired menu item.

Step 112BB refers to performing the operational functions in a tutorial manner, that is, the electronic device shows the user step by step the functions to be performed. In setting a PIN code, the operation of the device could be such that the device displays one by one the hierarchical menu items to follow, for instance, Menu -> Settings -> Security Settings -> PIN Code Request -> Enter PIN Code. The device could go in step-by-step manner from one level to the next level automatically after five seconds, for instance, or the length of the time when to proceed to the next level could be set by the user. In one embodiment, the user can adjust the stepping time during the tutoring, that is, the user can indicate that the device should make step transitions faster or slower. Alternatively, the device can at each stage wait until the user presses a

key before proceeding to the next menu item in the menu structure.

The menu structure of an electronic device may be considered to be a state machine, where jumping between menu items corresponds to state transitions in the state machine. Correspondingly, a tag may contain a macro
5 or another corresponding set of instructions for performing necessary state transitions in the state machine.

In one embodiment of the invention, the data storage element contains a software code, which can be read by the device. The controller of the device may either add the read software code portion to an existing software
10 base in the device, or it may replace a software code portion in the device. One example is a filter for a graphics application. A data storage element could contain a new filter, which the user could try out by reading the filter software by the device. Usage of the read software can be limited by the number of usage times, for instance. Alternatively, certain time period may be set during
15 which the read software code can be run on the device.

The data that is read from a data storage element, such as a tag, is not limited to the examples given above. The data content may also be a media content, such as a ring tone. Then, by reading the ring tone, the tone may be added to the existing ring tone base in the device. The data content may
20 also be of a visual character. One example of such is a holiday resort specific picture frame, for instance. The specific picture frame could be added to a picture taken in that resort.

Figure 1C shows another embodiment specifying the method disclosed in Figure 1A. Figure 1C relates to a situation where a user has purchased an electronic device, such as a mobile phone. The device is usually
25 sold in a selling box made of cardboard, for instance. In the embodiment illustrated by Figure 1C, the selling box includes one or more data storage elements illustrating functionalities that the phone maker especially wishes to introduce to a buyer of the phone.

30 Step 100C refers to identifying a new functionality or application associated with the device. The buyer of the phone can become aware of new functionality by advertising from the seller of the device or by getting information on the new application from the selling box, for instance.

For instance, if a phone includes a new type of alarm clock functionality,
35 the phone maker may provide the selling box with a tag introducing this new functionality to the user. Step 102C refers to locating of the tag in the

selling box. The locating of the tag can be made easier by printing some illustrative text or figures on the box. Then, according to step 110C, when the user has located the desired tag and wants to try the new application associated with the device, all that is needed is to read the tag from the selling box by using the electronic device. Then the phone starts the selected application according to step 112C.

Figures 2A and 2B relate to the method illustrated by Figure 1C. In Figure 2A, the user has removed the electronic device 200 from the selling box 220. The electronic device includes reading means 202 for reading one or more of the RF tags 222A to 222C included in the selling box 220. The selling box 220 can also include an identifier 224A to 224C, such as a picture and/or text, for each tag 222A to 222C. If the selling box 220 is made of cardboard, the tags 222A to 222C could be embedded into the cardboard or glued to the surface of the selling box 220, for instance. Tags 222A to 222C could also be printed or painted or formed in another corresponding manner to the selling box 220.

Figure 2B shows how the reading means 202 of the electronic device 200 have been moved into the proximity of the tag 222A. Display 204 of the electronic device 200 highlights initiation of the application provoked by the tag 222A. The tags 222A to 222C are so positioned on the selling box 220 that the reading of two tags simultaneously by using the phone 200 is avoided. The tags can either be positioned far enough from each other or by making the reading distance of the tags very short.

In addition to the given examples, such as a user manual and a selling box, data storage elements may be placed in a multitude of places. Storage elements can be placed on street advertisements and they can be sent on a postcard. The latter may be especially useful when registered buyers of a device can be rewarded by sending them a postcard containing some extra data storage elements. Furthermore, data storage elements may be available in public places. One example is an airport having a tag which sets the clock of the mobile phone to the local time of the airport. Figure 3 illustrates another embodiment of an arrangement according to the invention. The arrangement includes a user manual 320 of the electronic device 200. The user manual contains on a double page pages 324 and 326 and each page contains a respective data storage element, 322A and 322B, such as an RF tag. It can be seen that tags 322A and 322B are positioned far away from each other so that when

the reader 202 of the electronic device 200 is utilised, only one of the tags 322A and 322B will be read at a time. Figure 3 also shows a third tag 322C that is on a page under page 324. Tags 322A and 322C are positioned so that they do not overlap with each other in order to reduce the risk of unintentionally reading tag 322C when intending to read tag 322A.

Figure 4 illustrates the structure of the electronic device 200, such as a mobile phone, as a block diagram. The device 200 can include inputting means 400, which can be a keyboard, for instance. The inputting means may be needed when the information included in a data storage element 422 is shown to the user in a tutorial way and input from the user is needed. The device also contains reading means 402 for reading from the data storage element 422 and/or writing to the element. Depending on the structure of the data storage element 422, the reader 402 can be adapted to be able to read information from one or more different types of data storage elements, such as RF tags, barcodes, www addresses, hidden texts and so on. The reader 402 can be implemented in a known manner and does not need to be described in detail here.

The electronic device 200 can also contain outputting means 404, which can be implemented as a display and/or a loudspeaker, for instance. The outputting means 404 can thus inform/instruct a user visually and/or by sound of an operational function that is performed on the basis of a read data storage element. In case the electronic device 200 is a mobile phone, the device includes a transceiver 406 for receiving and transmitting user data between the mobile phone and a mobile network.

The electronic device also contains a controller 408 that implements the operational function on the basis of the information included in a read data storage element.

In one embodiment, the controller 408 contains tutoring means 408A, which is arranged to implement the operational function in a tutorial way. Then, the controller 408 can utilize other resources of the device, such as the outputting means 404 for displaying information on a display or giving sound instructions via the loudspeaker of the device. Tutoring means 408A can also take inputs from the user via the inputting means 400 of the device. In another embodiment, the controller 408 contains an automatic implementing means 408B, which is arranged to perform an operational function automatically based on the information read from a data storage element. Automatic imple-

menting means 408B can be activated when the reader reads a tag from a selling box and a corresponding operational function shall be performed automatically. Automatic implementing means 408B can also be activated when a user reads a solution to a problem from a user manual, and the device implements the corresponding operational function automatically.

Functionality of the controller 408 can be implemented as software, for instance, on a processor of the electronic device 200. Instead of software, the controller can be implemented as ASIC (Application Specific Integrated Circuit) or as separate logic components.

It will be obvious to a person skilled in the art that, as the technology advances, the inventive concept can be implemented in various ways. The invention and its embodiments are not limited to the examples described above but may vary within the scope of the claims.